

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 08602

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, RP
SUBJ: INTERIM LEGISLATURE PREPARATIONS CNTINUE

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MARCOS IS REVIEWING DRAFT PRO-
CEDURAL RULES FOR HIS NEW LEGISLATURE WHICH CONVENES
JUNE 12. HE WILL CAUCUS WITH HIS CABINET, THE KBL
CONTINGENT AND THE FULL LEGISLATURE NEXT WEEK TO COMPLETE
THE ARRANGEMENTS. COLUMINIST EXPECT EITHER ROMULO OR EX-
CHIEF JUSTICE MAKALINTAL TO BE CHOSEN DEPUTY PRIME
MINISTER. THE DRAFT PROCEDURES SEVERELY LIMIT THE
POSSIBILITY OF UNCONTROLLED CRITICISM OF THE ADMINISTRA-
TION BY ASSEMBLYMEN. MARCOS WIL INITIALLY APPONT ONLY
NINE CABINET MEMBERS WITH PORTFOLIO TO NON-ELECTED SEATS
BUT MAY SOON CREATE NEW MINISTRIES. THE SUPREME COURT
IS MOVING TO RESOLVE THE REMAINING ELECTION DISPUTE IN
CENTRAL MINDANAO. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT MARCOS TOLD NEWSMEN MAY 23 HE HAS BEEN CARE-
FULLY REVIEWING DRAFT PROCEDURES FOR THE INTERIM LEGISLA-
TURE (IBP). HE WILL MEE WITH THE CABINET, THE KBL
MAJORITY GROUP AND THE FULL IBP MEMBERSHIP ABOUT JUNE 1.
THESE MEETINGS, HE SAID, WILL MAKE FINAL DECISIONS ON
"ALMOST EVERYTHING."

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3. AS MARCOS DESCRIBED IT, THE FORMAL LEADERSHIP WILL
CONSIST ONLY OF A DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, A SPEAKER, A
FLOOR LEADER AND A WHIP. THERE WILL BE ABOUT 30 COMMIT-
TEES, MOST TO BE HEADED BY CABINET MEMBERS. TWO LOCAL
COLUMINISTS HAVE SPECULATED ABOUT APPOINTMENTS TO IBP
LEADERSHIP POSTIONS. "DAILY EXPRESS" VALENCIA MAY 14
PREDICTED FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO WOULD BE CHOSEN DEPUTY

PRIME MINISTER, FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE MAKALINTAL WOULD BE SPEAKER, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECRETARY RONO WOULD BE FLOOR LEADER. "BULLETIN TODAY'S" BIGORNIA, ON THE OTHER HAND, REPORTED MAY 20 THAT MAKALINTAL WAS FAVORED FOR DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER WHILE ROMULO WAS MORE LIKELY TO BE SPEAKER.

4. THE DRAFT IBP PROCEDURES WERE DRAWN UP BY A COMMITTEE HEADED BY RONO. PRESS ATTENTION HAS FOCUSED ON PROPOSALS THAT THE TRADITIONAL "PRIVILEGE PERIOD," WHERE MEMBERS CAN SPEAK ON ANY TOPIC THEY CHOOSE, HAS BEEN DROPPED. A "QUESTION PERIOD," WHERE MEMBERS MAY DEMAND ANSWERS FROM CABINET MEMBERS, WILL BE RETAINED, BUT QUESTIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING THREE DAYS IN ADVANCE. COMMITTEES CANNOT INITIATE INVESTIGATIONS OR HOLD HEARINGS WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE, AND ALL BILLS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE BEFORE THEY CAN BE INTRODUCED OR DEBATED. THE PRIME MINISTER (MARCOS) WILL HEAD THE STEERING COMMITTEE.

5. IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION MAY 23, MARCOS TOLD THE CHARGE THAT THE IBP WILL MEET CEREMONIALLY FOR THREE OR FOUR DAYS AND THEN WILL COME BACK SOMETIME LATER TO MEET FOR A MAXIMUM OF 100 DAYS. THE NATIONAL BUDGET WILL BE THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE ITEM ON THE AGENDA. MARCOS CONFIDED THAT HE HAS SOME DOUBTS THAT THE NEW ASSEMBLYMEN ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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PSYCHOLOGICALLY PREPARED TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF IBP WORK. HE IS CONCERNED THAT THE NEW MEMBERS WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY CONSTRAINTS WHICH DID NOT EXIST IN THE OLD CONGRESS. THEY ARE ALSO COMPLAINING BITTERLY, HE SMILED, THAT THE NEW IBP BUILDING, IN THE NETHER REACHES OF SUBURBAN QUEZON CITY, HAS NO AIR CONDITIONING OR ELEVATORS.

6. MARCOS ALSO TOLD THE PRESS MAY 23 THAT HE EXPECTS TO APPOINT ONLY NINE NON-ELECTED CABINET MEMBERS TO THE IBP; HE IS CONSTITUTIONALLY PERMITTED TO NAME UP TO TWENTY. HE WILL NOMINATE ONLY THOSE WHO HEAD ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS BUT HE HINTED THAT HE WILL SOON CREATE SEVERAL NEW MINISTRIES AND WILL APPOINT THEIR MINISTERS TO THE IBP LATER. AT THE OUTSET, THEN, THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE IBP WILL BE 189 (165 ELECTED, 14 SECTORAL REPS, 9 APPOINTED CABINET MEMBERS, PLUS THE PRESIDENT).

7. MEANWHILE, THE SUPREME COURT ACTED MAY 23 TO BEGIN RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE IN REGION XII (COTABATO) WHICH HAS DELAYED THE COMPLETION OF THE ELECTIONS. IT ALLOWED THE COUNTING OF RESULTS TO CONTINUE, DESPITE CLAIMS BY THE "COMMUNITY CONSENSUS" PARTY THAT VOTES WERE COUNTED ON THE

DAY BEFORE THE ELECTION IN SOME AREAS. THE COURT WILL ISSUE GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTINUED COUNTING BY THE END OF THE WEEK, AND OFFICIAL WINNERS OF THE EIGHT SEATS SHOULD BE ANNOUNCED SOON THEREAFTER. TOUSSAINT

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